



2003 Review



The first UK-based international humanitarian organisation to enter post-war Baghdad was Merlin. Amidst chaos, our medical teams and logisticians brought neutral humanitarian assistance to people in desperate need. War also convulsed Liberia in 2003. Merlin was the only international NGO helping casualties throughout the fighting.

Despite persisting violence, Liberia soon dropped from the headlines. Merlin's work, which began in 1997, continued – with life-saving activities like mass immunisation, local health staff training, community health education and clinic rehabilitation. In October 2003, we became the first NGO to provide emergency medical services in the rebel-held south-eastern provinces.

Regardless of politics, religion or race, Merlin brings rapid aid to vulnerable people anywhere in the world. We keep on helping in situations of chronic crisis. And through training and capacity building, we make improvements to health services which last.

Your support is what makes these achievements possible.



Countries operational 2003: 13
Target population (Dec): 16.2 million
Direct beneficiaries monthly: 570,000

London HQ Staff: 30
National field staff: 1,167
International field staff: 96

The number of Merlin's field staff doubled in 2003. HQ staff remained the same.

Target population: the size of the population served by Merlin-supported services.
Direct beneficiary: anyone who has received direct assistance from a Merlin-supported service.

The Merlin team carries an injured man to safety, Monrovia, Liberia, July 2003.

EMERGENCY RESPONSES

IRAQ

Priority was given to increasing access to healthcare for the most vulnerable groups.

Operational since: 2003

Target population: 4.5 million

Direct beneficiaries monthly average: 165,000

- Emergency treatment for war casualties
- Distribution of emergency health kits
- Revitalisation of essential primary healthcare and selected secondary paediatric services in Baghdad
- Clinic rehabilitation
- Water and sanitation
- Local emergency response capacity strengthened

LIBERIA

War displaced around six hundred thousand people; health services are shattered or non-existent.

Operational since: 1997

Target population: 460,000

Direct beneficiaries monthly average: 202,000

- Emergency treatment for war casualties
- Medical care for 180,000 displaced people
- Training for health workers and midwives
- Support and rehabilitation for clinics and the Monrovia Government Hospital
- Mass measles immunisation
- Water and sanitation – 2,700 wells chlorinated

IRAN

When a powerful earthquake hit Bam on December 26th 2003, Merlin responded within 36 hours. A team comprised of doctors, nurses and logisticians carried out emergency assessments in the city and the surrounding region of Kerman. Two truckloads of emergency medical supplies were distributed in the worst affected areas. Merlin worked closely with the Iranian Ministry of Health to ensure that aid went where it was most urgently needed.

In 2003 Merlin also carried out humanitarian assessments in **Southern Sudan, Uganda, India** (Kashmir), **Burkina Faso** and **Myanmar**.

MOTHER AND CHILD CARE

In March 2003, a Merlin midwife living in Kindu took in a pregnant woman who had fled her village after witnessing the murder of twelve members of her family. Weak and traumatised by her ordeal, during her journey she had gone into labour.

The midwife fed and cared for the woman as her labour progressed, then transferred her to the nearby Merlin clinic, where she successfully gave birth to a baby girl.

During the following months, vitamin supplements, bed nets and immunisations provided by Merlin helped to ensure the long-term health and welfare of mother and child.

Expectant mothers at a Merlin health centre, Kindu, Democratic Republic of Congo.



Photo: Jean-Christophe Goussaud



COMMUNITY ACTION

By working closely with local people, Merlin ensures that its programmes are well targeted and valued by those they aim to help. In the Khatlon Oblast and Rasht Valley regions of Tajikistan, community groups meet in seminars supported by Merlin. They discuss public health issues, decide priorities and make action plans for their villages.

The community groups then mobilise village residents to undertake health improvement projects, enabled by Merlin's financial and technical backing. Rehabilitation of clinics, the construction of latrines for schools and drainage clearance are a few of the durable improvements that have been achieved by these partnerships.

Conducting a health survey, Tajikistan.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

AFGHANISTAN

Provision of primary health services, including child nutrition and family planning, for local and displaced populations in Takhar province; clinic rehabilitation; malaria control.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Four hospitals and 110 health centres received wide-ranging support in 2003. Activities included provision of free healthcare, child nutrition, clinic rehabilitation, water and sanitation, and HIV/AIDS awareness building.

ETHIOPIA

Water distribution and sanitation programme, with community education; malaria outbreak emergency response; primary healthcare and training; nutritional surveying.

GEORGIA

Improving TB diagnosis and management in Shida Kartli region, with training, community education and outreach care.

IVORY COAST

Primary healthcare using mobile clinics, and water and sanitation, for internally displaced people.

KENYA

Improving detection, diagnosis and treatment of malaria, with an emphasis on public education; water and sanitation.

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Emergency intervention to improve the health of village women and children in the West Bank; training for health professionals and community members.

RUSSIA

TB capacity building successfully completed in Tomsk, Siberia.

SIERRA LEONE

Wide-ranging support to clinics and hospitals, including the 150 bed paediatric ward in Kenema hospital; provision of healthcare in refugee camps; training for traditional birth attendants; Lassa fever programme; malaria control.

TAJIKISTAN (and Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan)

Malaria control; infectious disease control in Rayons of Republican Subordination and Khatlon Oblast; emergency preparedness in the Rasht valley.

ACCOUNTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	2003 (£000s)	2002 (£000s)
INCOME		
Programme Income	13,378	7,312
Other Income	916	630
Total Income	14,294	7,942
EXPENDITURE		
Direct Project Expenditure	13,072	7,349
Fundraising Costs	207	131
Management and Administration	564	476
Total Expenditure	13,843	7,956
NET MOVEMENT FOR THE YEAR	451	-14
RESERVES AT YEAR END	623	172

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2003, Merlin increased direct programme expenditure by 78%, the result of new country start-ups, an increase in the number of programmes, and an increase in the number of staff in the field. By contrast, management, administration and fundraising expenditure increased by only 27%. Overall, management, administration and fundraising represented 5% of total expenditure, compared to 8% in 2002.

The above information is extracted from the financial statements for 2003, approved on April 22nd 2004. Copies are available from the Administrator, Merlin, 4th Floor, 56-64 Leonard Street, London, EC2A 4LT.

The financial statements were audited by Kingston Smith, Chartered Accountants, whose report was unqualified.

Merlin (Medical Emergency Relief International) is a registered charity: 10016607.



George Cox, Director General of the Institute of Directors and Chair of Merlin's board of trustees, with friend, outside Kindu hospital, Democratic Republic of Congo.

I visited the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003 and witnessed first hand some of the devastating consequences of the bloody civil war which has raged there for nearly ten years. Over three million people have died, hundreds of thousands of families have been displaced, and many thousands of children are orphaned. Fundamental things which we take for granted – healthcare, safe water, food – are scarce in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I also witnessed the immense effectiveness of Merlin's health workers. In the east of the country, the worst affected by the war, they are getting medical aid to the people who need it most. The healthcare programmes which they are implementing don't just relieve immediate suffering. They will serve communities for years to come. Currently, over a million people are benefiting.

This work does one simple thing: it saves lives.

There can be a brighter future for the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo. A peace accord has been signed and a new transitional government is in place. Merlin is helping to build that future.

George Cox, Merlin Chairman



Bam, Iran,
December 2003.

“Looking back over 2003 we see how chronic emergencies, in DR Congo, Liberia and elsewhere, persisted, while new conflicts and crises arose. But people’s suffering is not inevitable – with your help, we can do so much to alleviate it.”

Geoff Prescott, Merlin Chief Executive

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Merlin exists to provide an immediate and effective response to medical emergencies throughout the world.

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